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THE WHITE HOUSE

WASHINGTON

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January 8, 1982

82-4077

MEMORANDUM FOR THE VICE PRESIDENT
THE SECRETARY OF STATE
THE SECRETARY OF THE TREASURY
THE SECRETARY OF DEFENSE
THE ATTORNEY GENERAL
THE COUNSELLOR TO THE PRESIDENT
THE DIRECTOR OF CENTRAL INTELLIGENCE
THE CHIEF OF STAFF TO THE PRESIDENT
THE DEPUTY CHIEF OF STAFF TO THE PRESIDENT
THE CHAIRMAN, THE JOINT CHIEFS OF STAFF

SUBJECT: Draft NSDD 19 on Protection of Classified
National Security Information

The continuing unauthorized disclosure of sensitive national security information is of great concern to the President. At Tab A is a draft National Security Decision Directive that would implement a strict new policy designed to reduce, if not eliminate, this leakage.

The primary focus of the draft Directive is on the protection of National Security Council information, but in the last paragraph I have included a requirement for the Agencies and Departments to adopt complementary policies for the protection of other national security information.

We should not underestimate the adverse reaction from the media when the new policy is announced. But I am absolutely convinced that the proposed policy is required, legal, fair and defensible.

At Tab B is a proposed Presidential Statement which could be used with the announcement of a new policy.

Request your comments on these drafts by close of business on Monday, January 11, 1982.

William Clark
William P. Clark

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Review on January 8, 1988

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NSDD # 19

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NATIONAL SECURITY DECISION
DIRECTIVE NUMBERProtection of Classified National Security Information

Unauthorized disclosures of national security and policy-deliberative information are a problem of epidemic proportion within the US Government. The Constitution of the United States provides for protection of individual rights and liberties, including freedom of speech, but it also requires that Government functions be discharged efficiently and effectively, especially where the national security is involved. As President of the United States, I am responsible for honoring both of these Constitutional requirements, and I intend to do so in a balanced and careful manner. That balance, unfortunately, has not been struck in recent years, and the resulting imbalance caused by unauthorized disclosures has hampered the proper functioning of Government.

To this end, I direct that the policies below be established and implemented. I realize that these measures, limited though they are, will cause controversy. I urge, however, that all concerned -- government employees, the media, and the American people at large -- recognize that these measures are clearly necessary and that the end result will be a more effective government.

Contacts with the Media

All contacts with any element of the media in which National Security matters are discussed will require the advance approval of a senior official at the level of an Assistant Secretary or higher. A memorandum of conversation will be prepared as soon as possible after the contact, recording the subjects discussed and all information provided to the media representatives.

Access

The unauthorized disclosure of National Security Council information, documents and deliberations requires further controls to limit access and an accurate accounting of those who have had access. I therefore direct my Assistant

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for National Security Affairs to develop and implement procedures that will keep the number of officials with access to documents relating to NSC matters to the minimum essential to the orderly conduct of the government's business; that will require personal accountability for all such officials by signature; and that will minimize and strictly control the reproduction of documents.

Investigations

The government's lack of success in identifying the sources of unauthorized disclosure of National Security Council information, documents and deliberations and taking appropriate disciplinary measures must be remedied. Henceforth, government employees who have had access to information relating to NSC matters, as identified by signature, in the event of the unauthorized disclosure of information in those documents or the deliberations relating thereto, will be subject to investigation, to include if necessary a polygraph interview.

Applicability and Implementation

The provision of this directive shall apply to all employees of, and elements within agencies participating in the NSC, to include the Executive Office of the President. The Assistant to the President for National Security Affairs shall be responsible for implementation of these policies. These policies shall be effective immediately.

The members of the NSC shall adopt departmental measures to insure comparable protection for national security information under departmental purview. The heads of such departments and agencies shall report to the Assistant to the President for National Security Affairs within thirty days actions taken to implement this directive.

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PRESIDENTIAL STATEMENT

As President, I am acutely aware that the American people have a right to know, via a free press, what their government is doing so that they can render informed judgment of their elected officials via the ballot box.

I am also aware of my responsibility to lead this nation effectively, so that the welfare and security of the American people can be guaranteed.

Unfortunately, a pattern has developed in recent years which is directly hampering the development and implementation of an effective foreign policy for the United States. This pattern has manifested itself in a flow of unauthorized, highly sensitive information to the news media. In many such cases, the public appearance of such information rules out an option, or jeopardizes an ongoing policy.

I fully recognize the tension inherent in our system, wherein a free press is encouraged to collect and print whatever it believes to be in the public interest. The government for its part has the responsibility to protect certain categories of information, the revelation of which harms the interests of this country. The measures to be implemented by this Directive should not be construed as criticism of the press. The press has been doing its job--collecting information--better than the government has been doing its job--protecting national security information. The limited measures discussed below are designed to restore

a balance that has been lost. They are not designed to protect officials who seek to hide behind a classification stamp.

I realize that the measures in this Directive, limited though they are, will cause controversy. I urge that all concerned, media personnel, government employees, and the American people at large, recognize that these measures are clearly necessary and that the end result will be a more effective government still reported and interpreted closely by a free and vigorous press.